

I want to pay special thanks to Congressman BOB ETHERIDGE, the author of the House companion bill, and House Judiciary Committee Chairman SENBRENNER for their leadership and fortitude while negotiating this legislation. Without their perseverance and willingness to find bipartisan compromise language, passage of this bill in the House would not have happened.

I also commend Congressman COBLE, Congressman BOBBY SCOTT, the Fraternal Order of Police and the Congressional Fire Services Institute for working with us on bipartisan compromise language so that we could pass the Senate bill through the House. I look forward to working with Senate Judiciary Chairman HATCH, Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, the lead Republican cosponsor of this bill, and Senate leadership to quickly pass the Senate bill, as amended by the House, and send it to the President's desk for enactment into law.

Public safety officers are our most brave and dedicated public servants. I applaud the efforts of all members of fire, law enforcement and EMS providers nationwide who are the first to respond to more than 1.6 million emergency calls annually—whether those calls involve a crime, fire, medical emergency, spill of hazardous materials, natural disaster, act of terrorism, or transportation accident—without reservation. Those men and woman act with an unwavering commitment to the safety and protection of their fellow citizens, and forever willing to selflessly sacrifice their own lives to provide safe and reliable emergency services to their communities.

Sadly, that kind of dedication can result in tragedy, which we all witnessed on September 11 as scores of firefighters, police officers and medics raced into the burning World Trade Center and Pentagon with no other goal than to save lives. Every year, hundreds of public safety officers nationwide lose their lives and thousands more are injured while performing duties that subject them to great physical risks. And while we know that PSOB benefits can never be a substitute for the loss of a loved one, the families of all our fallen heroes deserve to collect these funds.

The PSOB program was established in 1976 to authorize a one-time financial payment to the eligible survivors of Federal, State, and local public safety officers for all line of duty deaths. In 2001, Congress improved the PSOB regulations by streamlining the process for families of public safety officers killed or injured in connection with prevention, investigation, rescue or recovery efforts related to a terrorist attack. We also retroactively increased the total benefits available by \$100,000 as part of the USA PATRIOT Act. Survivors of first responders killed in the line of duty now receive \$267,494 in PSOB.

Unfortunately, the issue of covering heart attack and stroke victims under

PSOB regulations was not addressed at the time.

Service-connected heart, lung, and hypertension conditions are silent killers of public safety officers nationwide. The numerous hidden health dangers dealt with by police officers, fire fighters and EMS personnel are widely recognized, but officers face these dangers in order to serve and protect their fellow citizens.

The intent of the legislation Senator GRAHAM and I introduced earlier this year was to cover officer who suffered a heart attack or stroke as a result of nonroutine stressful or strenuous physical activity. As drafted and passed by the Senate by unanimous consent on May 16, however, members of the House Judiciary Committee felt the bill's language would cover officers who did not engage in any physical activity, but merely happened to suffer a heart attack while at work. Chairman SENBRENNER, Congressman ETHERIDGE, Congressman COBLE, Congressman SCOTT, FOP, CFSI and I worked out a substitute amendment to address those concerns.

The substitute amendment to S. 459 will create a presumption that an officer who died as a direct injury sustained in the line of duty if the following is established: That officer participated in a training exercise that involved nonroutine stressful or strenuous physical activity or responded to a situation and such participation or response involved nonroutine stressful or strenuous physical law enforcement, hazardous material response, emergency medical services, prison security, fire suppression, rescue, disaster relief or other emergency response activity; that officer suffered a heart attack or stroke while engaging or within 24 hours of engaging in that physical activity; and such presumption cannot be overcome by competent medical evidence.

For the purposes of this act, the phrase "nonroutine stressful or strenuous physical" will exclude actions of a clerical, administrative or non-manual nature. Included in the category of "actions of a clerical, administrative or non-manual nature" are such tasks including, but not limited to, the following: sitting at a desk; typing on a computer; talking on the telephone; reading or writing paperwork or other literature; watching a police or corrections facility's monitors of cells or grounds; teaching a class; cleaning or organizing an emergency response vehicle; signing in or out a prisoner; driving a vehicle on routine patrol; and directing traffic at or participating in a local parade.

Such deaths, while tragic, are not to be considered in the lien of duty deaths. The families of officers who died of such causes would therefore not be eligible to receive PSOB.

For the purposes of this Act, the phrase "nonroutine stressful or strenuous physical" actions will include, but are not limited to, the following:

involvement in a physical struggle with a suspected or convicted criminal; performing a search and rescue mission; performing or assisting with emergency medical treatment; performing or assisting with fire suppression; involvement in a situation that requires either a high speed response or pursuit on foot or in a vehicle; participation in hazardous material response; responding to a riot that broke out at a public event; and physically engaging in the arrest or apprehension of a suspected criminal.

The situations listed above are the types of heart attack and stroke cases that are considered to be in the line of duty. The families of officers who died in such cases are eligible to receive PSOB.

Heart attacks and strokes are a reality of the high-pressure jobs of police officers, firefighters and medics. These are killers that first responders contend with in their jobs, just like speeding bullets and burning buildings. They put their lives on the line for us, and we owe their families our gratitude, our respect and our help. No amount of money can fill the void that is left by these losses, but ending this disparity can help these families keep food on the table and shelter over their heads.

I urge the Senate to take up and pass the Hometown Heroes Survivors Benefits Act, S. 459, as amended and passed this morning by the House, and show its support and appreciation for these extraordinarily brave and heroic public safety officers.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN MEMORY OF JUDGE RAYMOND J. PETTINE

• Mr. REED. Mr. President, on Monday, November 17, 2003, Rhode Island, the judicial community and the entire Nation lost a great jurist, a great scholar and a great man. U.S. District Court Judge Raymond J. Pettine passed away leaving a legacy of protecting individual liberties and constitutional rights.

Judge Pettine was born July 6, 1912 on America Street in Federal Hill, one of the original Italian neighborhoods in Providence; a fitting place to be born for someone who would champion the Constitution that distinguishes this country, America, from so many others. His father was a wigmaker in Italy who immigrated to these shores to find a better life for his family and to make a better America through his labors and his sacrifice. Judge Pettine was sustained and inspired by the example of these good people, his mother and father. The hard work, the great patriotism, the unwavering decency and integrity, the deep respect for both family and faith, the gracious manners of a true gentleman were learned in that home on America Street.

Early in his life, Judge Pettine became fascinated with the law. As a

child of eight, he scrawled a note to the Dean of Harvard Law School and asked him, "What do you have to do to become a lawyer?" The Dean wrote in reply "study hard, be a good boy, always have a dream." His dream led him to Providence College and Boston University Law School. Soon after graduation, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and served on active duty from 1941 until 1946 rising to the rank of major. He later would be promoted to colonel in the Judge Advocate General Corps as a reservist.

After his discharge from active duty and a brief stint in private practice, Judge Pettine began a 13-year career as a prosecutor in the Rhode Island Attorney General's office. Like every task he undertook, he brought great passion and determination to this endeavor. He understood that our adversarial system of justice requires that both the prosecution and the defense must bring the full weight of the facts and the law before the jury so that they may have the benefit of principled and forceful advocacy to make their decision. He was a tough and uncompromising prosecutor determined to enforce the law.

His reputation and his record as a prosecutor earned him appointment as the Federal Attorney for the District of Rhode Island in 1961. His service as Federal Attorney won him the praise of Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy as one of the nation's top three federal prosecutors. And, this prosecutorial experience would help make him a superb judge upon his appointment to the bench in 1966 by President Johnson. Judge Pettine recognized that the role of a judge was different than that of a prosecutor or defense counsel. He was charged with something greater than simply enforcing the law or arguing for a client. He was charged with seeking justice, that delicate balance that rests on fairness and a keen understanding of the nature of people as well as the tenets of the law. He was also charged in a special way with defending the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. He recognized that our democracy, in his words, "prizes itself in having a Bill of Rights designed to protect us against despotic abuse of authority by the government."

There was no more courageous, forceful or principled defender of the Constitution than Raymond Pettine. In 30 years on the Federal bench, and as chief judge from 1971 to 1982, Judge Pettine staunchly guarded the individual rights enshrined in the Constitution. He said the Constitution should be interpreted in ways that "give meaning to the heart and soul of what it's all about: a kinder, more understanding Constitution that recognizes the disenfranchised, the poor and underprivileged."

In his rulings, he repeatedly upheld the Bill of Rights' freedom of speech, of religion and of privacy.

Pettine stood by the Constitution and showed courage in the face of controversy when he, a practicing Catho-

lic, ruled that municipalities could not erect Christmas Nativity scenes on public land. As he said, "I firmly believe this with great conviction: that there has to be a separation between church and State—that one of the saving graces of this country is the fact that we are tolerant of all religions, and even of those who have no religion. And, if we start breaking that down, we are going to be in an awful lot of trouble."

His wise defense of the Constitution and its protections for individual conscience brought him vicious criticism and personal scorn. But, no amount of criticism or scorn could deter him from his obligation to extend the protections of the Constitution to the poor as well as the powerful, to the maligned as well as the popular.

Judge Pettine embraced his judicial duties with remarkable dedication. He became a scholar of the law and, in order to insulate himself from even the appearance of partiality, he led a life focused on his family and the lonely rigors of his judicial responsibilities. Nevertheless, he cut a dashing figure in Rhode Island. He was a man of great culture and erudition who exuded style and panache.

Judge Raymond J. Pettine has left a remarkable legacy. His wisdom, his integrity and his selfless devotion to the Constitution made him a judge of extraordinary achievement. His love of family and his compassionate regard for all he met made him a man of singular worth. I admire him greatly. He has given us the example and the confidence to carry on. And, his presence will continue to be felt whenever we stand up in defense of the Constitution and in defense of those who are "disenfranchised, the poor and underprivileged."

My deepest condolences go out to his family and friends, especially his daughter, Lee Gillespie, his granddaughter, Lauren Gillespie and his son-in-law, Thomas Gillespie.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:01 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1) to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a voluntary program for prescription drug coverage under the Medicare Program, to modernize the Medicare Program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a deduction to individuals for amounts contributed to health savings security accounts and health savings accounts, to provide for the disposition of unused health benefits in cafeteria plans and flexible spending arrangements, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House agrees to the report of the com-

mittee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2622) to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act, to prevent identity theft, improve resolution of consumer disputes, improve the accuracy of consumer records, make improvements in the use of, and consumer access to, credit information, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House agrees to the following bills, each with an amendment in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

S. 459. An act to ensure that a public safety officer who suffers a fatal heart attack or stroke while on duty shall be presumed to have died in the line of duty for purposes of public safety officer survivor benefits;

S. 877. An act to regulate interstate commerce by imposing limitations and penalties on the transmission of unsolicited commercial electronic mail via the Internet; and

S. 1768. An act to extend the national flood insurance program.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 579. An act to reauthorize the National Transportation Safety Board, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bills and joint resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate.

H.R. 1964. An act to assist the States of Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania in conserving priority lands and natural resources in the Highlands region, and for other purposes;

H.R. 2584. An act to provide for the conveyance to the Utrok Atoll local government of a decommissioned National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ship, and for other purposes;

H.R. 3181. An act to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to reauthorize the predisaster mitigation program, and for other purposes; and

H.J. Res. 80. Joint resolution appointing the day for the convening of the second session of the One Hundred Eighth Congress.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 206. Concurrent resolution supporting the National Marrow Donor Program and encouraging Americans to learn about the importance of bone marrow donation; and

H. Con. Res. 229. Concurrent resolution providing for the sine die adjournment of the first session of the One Hundred Eight Congress.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. COLLINS, from the Committee on Governmental Affairs, without amendment:

S. 1683. A bill to provide for a report on the parity of pay and benefits among Federal law enforcement officers and to establish an exchange program between Federal law enforcement employees and State and local law enforcement employees (Rept. No. 108-207).